

[Mr. Maston Harris]

Beliefs and Customs-Sketches

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Grace Monroe

Dist. 4, Jefferson County , Ind, 1938/39

Morgan's Raid

[433?] words

Ref. (A): Mr. Maston Harris—an old negro of [Hanover?].

At the time of Morgan's Raid Mrs. Harris was a widow and lived with her five little boys in [Hanover?].

The word came by messenger that Morgan was on the way. In great agitation Mrs. Harris bundled her little [breed?] into a one horse spring wagon, together with her flour, and sides of bacon, and leading their other horse and an old cow they started for Graysville, a negro settlement about three miles away. In reality they were going nearer Morgan. They were afraid to return home for about two weeks.

The present roads [#6?] and [25?] were blockaded for about four or five miles West of Madison. Large trees were cut so they fell across the road. Many Home Guards were stationed at Madison. Large [gum?] trees belonging to Mrs. Harris were used for this protection.

One of Morgan's [stragglers?] reached a point West of Grange Hall on State Road [#6?]. He rode up to the gate of the John [Schmidlap?] farm, where he received the command to halt. Instead of obeying he reached for his gun but Mr. [Schmidlap?] fired first and killed the man. So far as known this was the only casualty during the raid in the section.

The following incident was told to Mr. Harris by the jockey who saved the thoroughbreds: Morgan and his men were traveling in Ohio, when they came to the farm of a race horse owner. They camped on the lawn for the night. After dark they demanded that the jockey

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would get the racer for them. He told them the stables were quite a distance away but he would go at once, so accompanied by a Confederate he sat out equipped with a stub of a candle. When they reached the stable, the negro stumbled and the candle went out. He requested his companion to wait while he would get another match, and hurried to the opposite side of the barn where he hastily grabbed a sack and placed it over the racer's head and rode off quite a distance and tied up the horse leaving its head covered so that it would not neigh.

He consumed so much time his companion had tired of waiting in the pitch darkness. Not being content with saving his own horse, the jockey slipped back to the yard where Morgan's men were sleeping, many having their horses strapped to their arms, he cut the straps and secured two valuable horses. Later these horses were claimed but before one was identified, the jockey again came to the [rescue?] by putting a niche in the horses tail. The real owner thus was thwarted in his attempt at recovering his horse. (A)